

Digital Projects for the Public: Instructions for Preparing a Discovery Grant Application

Expected Outcome: A design document that details the project's humanities content and the format(s) being developed. The document must also provide a detailed outreach plan for reaching a wide public audience.

- ☐ **Verify your institution's registration or register your institution with Grants.gov.** Complete at least four weeks before the deadline.
- ☐ **Download the application package from Grants.gov.** The [program resource page](#) on NEH's website has a direct link to the package. You can also search Grants.gov for this program. The program resource page has a direct link to the instructions for completing the package.
- ☐ **Complete the application using the following guidelines.** The narrative should not assume specialized knowledge, and it should be free of jargon. It should clearly define technical terms so that they are comprehensible to a nonspecialist audience.

Application attachments:

☐ 1) Table of Contents

List all parts of the application with corresponding page numbers.

☐ 2) Application Narrative (up to fifteen single-spaced pages)

The narrative should contain the following, in this order.

A) *Nature of the request* (one or two paragraphs):

- Provide a brief overview of the project, its intended goals and outcomes, its format, and the amount of funding requested.

B) *Humanities content*:

- Discuss the significant humanities ideas, themes, and scholarship on which the project is based.
- If applicable, describe how the project would differ from other projects that explore similar subject matter.
- Describe the most important resources on which the project will draw, including audio and visual materials, documents, and other archival artifacts.

C) *Project format*:

- Briefly describe the format(s) and design(s) that you are considering, and explain how they will attract users.
- Explain how the format would convey the project's central humanities ideas.
- If there are successful models for this type of approach, briefly describe them here.

D) *User-generated content*:

- If the project includes user-generated content, describe how it will add to the humanities content and explain the criteria and process to be

used for selecting and monitoring the content that will be made available to the public.

- Describe the policies and process to be used to prevent the dissemination of obscene, libelous, or defamatory content (including hate speech, personal attacks, or material constituting harassment).

E) *Audience and distribution:*

- Discuss potential audiences for the project and the ways in which you would reach those audiences.

F) *Rights, permissions, and licensing:*

- Explain how you will determine who controls the rights to the materials and technologies being used.

G) *Humanities advisers:*

- List the project's humanities advisers.
- Discuss the rationale for their choice and the contributions that each will make to shape the project's content.

H) *Digital media team:*

- Provide information about the principal members of the digital media team and their contributions to the project.

I) *State of the project:*

- Discuss the project's origins, progress to date, and fundraising plans.

J) *Work plan:*

- Provide a month-by-month schedule of the major work to be done during the grant period and the personnel assigned to accomplish these tasks.
- Include a schedule of meetings, being especially clear about when meetings with scholars and other consultants will occur.

K) *Organization profile (one paragraph):*

- Describe briefly the applicant institution and, if different, the production organization(s).

☐ 3) Bibliography (up to two single-spaced pages)

Provide a bibliography of the humanities scholarship that significantly informs the project. This bibliography should also include any collections or libraries in which archival material for the project has been identified.

☐ 4) Résumés and letters of commitment

Include résumés (of two pages or less) and letters of commitment from the key persons on the digital media team and all consultants (including humanities advisers or scholars). Also include letters of commitment from all participating organizations.

☐ 5) Description of your work sample

All applicants must submit a work sample by the project team that best represents the approach and format of the proposal under review. You may include a description of the work sample and an explanation of its relevance in this section. Ideally, this work sample will be included as a URL. If necessary, provide instructions for accessing the sample. If you are submitting your sample on a disk, please submit eight copies, following the instructions in the “How to Submit Samples (and, for Production Applications, Prototypes)” section of the guidelines.

☐ 6) Budget form

Using the instructions and the sample budget, complete the budget form (MS Excel format) or a format of your own that includes all the required information. (You can find links to the budget instructions, sample budget, and budget form on the [program resource page](#).)

Please identify all key project personnel by name on the budget form, and note the number of days that each of them will contribute to the project. Indicate in the budget if any of these individuals will perform different and separately budgeted functions.

If the applicant institution has a federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement and is claiming indirect costs, submit a copy of its agreement. Do not attach the agreement to your budget form. Instead you must attach it to the Budget Narrative Attachment Form (also known as the Budget Narrative File). (See the instructions for this form in the Application Checklist at the end of the main Digital Projects for the Public guidelines document.) Alternatively, you must attach a statement to the form, explaining a) that the applicant institution is not claiming indirect costs; b) that the applicant institution does not currently have a federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement; c) that the applicant institution is a sponsorship (umbrella) organization, which will charge an administrative fee of 5 percent of the total direct costs; or d) that the applicant institution is using the government-wide rate of up to 10 percent of the total direct costs, less distorting items (including but not limited to capital expenditures, participant stipends, fellowships, and the portion of each subgrant or subcontract in excess of \$25,000).

Indirect costs are computed by applying a negotiated indirect-cost rate to a distribution base (typically a portion of the direct costs of the project). If the application institution is claiming indirect costs and has a current federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement, include on the budget form the following information: a) the indirect-cost rate; b) the federal agency with which the agreement was negotiated; and c) the date of the agreement.

Organizations that wish to include overhead charges in the budget but do not have a current federally negotiated indirect-cost rate or have not submitted a pending indirect-cost proposal to a federal agency may choose one of the following options:

1. NEH will not require the formal negotiation of an indirect-cost rate, provided that the charge for indirect costs does not exceed the

government-wide rate of up to 10 percent of direct costs, less distorting items (including, but not limited to, capital expenditures, participant stipends, fellowships, and the portion of each individual subgrant or subcontract in excess of \$25,000). This option is not available to a sponsorship or umbrella organization—that is, an organization that applies for a grant on behalf of an organization that may not be eligible to apply directly to NEH for a grant. Applicants choosing this option should understand that they must maintain documentation to support overhead charges claimed as part of project costs.

2. If your organization wishes to use a rate higher than 10 percent, provide on the budget form an estimate of the indirect-cost rate and the charges. If the application is approved for funding, the award document will provide instructions on how to negotiate an indirect-cost rate with NEH.

☐ 7) Images and links to other assets (not required)

You may include images, production art, and other audiovisual assets with your application:

- Items that cannot be submitted as PDFs to Grants.gov should be sent on disk directly to the program or, in the case of audio or video, as URLs embedded within the application.
- Include in this attachment a list of media assets with short descriptions.